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August 2, 2012

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director and Health Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Fielding", followed by a stylized flourish.

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY-BASED EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROJECTS**

This is to inform you of the community-based emergency preparedness projects which the Department of Public Health (DPH) is implementing this fiscal year and over the next three years. The Los Angeles County Community Disaster Resilience Project will launch into its pilot phase in Los Angeles County communities this coming fall. The total funding amount for pilot communities participating in this initiative is \$240,000 per year (\$15,000 for each of the 16 communities selected) for three years, fully supported by the Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The approval to accept this funding was approved by the Board on June 6, 2012.

Beginning fiscal year 2012-13, the CDC required all PHEP funding recipients to demonstrate improvements in engaging diverse community sectors in emergency preparedness efforts related to public health, medical, and mental/behavioral health to strengthen local community preparedness capabilities. CDC will measure DPH's performance in developing innovative and evidenced-based training materials, outreach activities, and other methods of engaging eleven different community sectors in public health emergency preparedness and response activities at the neighborhood level. Sectors include businesses, community leadership, cultural and faith based groups and organizations, education and childcare settings, emergency management, healthcare, housing and sheltering, media, mental/behavioral health, social services, and senior services.

DPH will collaborate with community leaders to develop plans for public health emergency preparedness training and implementation of community engagement strategies to improve readiness in identified communities throughout Los Angeles County. For these plans, DPH will draw from information derived from the previous development phase of this project to implement and test community resilience building strategies using a community resilience toolkit. DPH created this toolkit based on findings from the development phase and included

components that were identified as high priority areas for Los Angeles County stakeholders, including leadership development in preparedness, outreach to vulnerable populations, and community asset and vulnerability mapping. The toolkit includes a set of strategies and materials that planning groups can use to build resilience in their communities.

DPH will be reviewing possible locations for this pilot implementation based on the following qualifications and key criteria which are consistent with the grant guidance from CDC: 1) relatively modest in size (no more than 30,000-40,000 population); 2) shared identity as a "community" with the presence of a local business community, school/school district, police and fire response agency, community clinic/hospital/health entity, and engaged community-based organizations; 3) sufficient organizational strength to implement the project via an existing (active for over three years) neighborhood planning group or other community coalition or council; and 4) diversity in socioeconomic status, race, culture, ethnicity, and exposure to health risks.

Under this initiative, DPH will work with the existing neighborhood planning groups or other community coalitions or councils in 16 places throughout the County to build new community capabilities in preparedness through the following activities: focused training to community leaders, outreach to community members (with an emphasis on access and functional needs populations and people with disabilities), updated and interactive information on the hazards, risks, vulnerabilities and assets in each community, and practical tools and strategies for community members to prepare collectively, increase volunteerism, build resilience, and improve their response to a range of potential health emergencies. The project will be thoroughly evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the strategy and interventions.

Community selection and assessment for readiness and willingness to participate in the project is on-going with an anticipated project launch date in late September. DPH will report on progress as requested throughout the pilot phase.

In addition to this project, other CDC PHEP funding includes: \$190,000 for Emergency Network Los Angeles, Los Angeles County's Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, for intensive collaborative partnership and implementation; \$200,000 to the University of California, Los Angeles Center for Health Services and Society for technical assistance; and \$200,000 to the RAND Corporation for evaluation implementation and support.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please let me know.

JEF:ap
PH:1206:008

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors